

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
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Your Turn

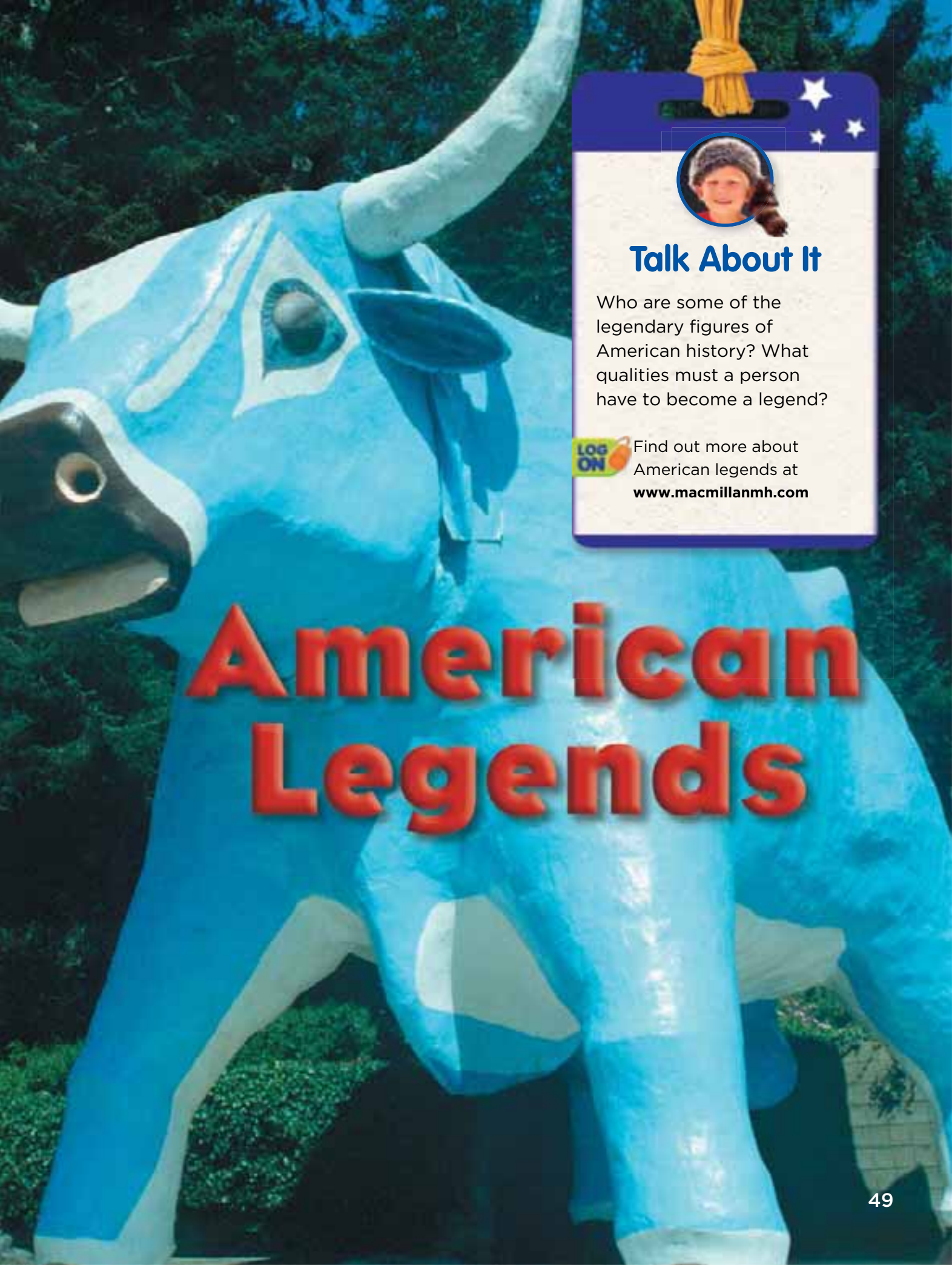
Write two or three paragraphs about a school contest that you have entered or that you would like to enter. Tell about what happened to you and how you felt. Be sure to use a topic sentence and supporting details in each paragraph. Use the writer's checklist to check your writing.



Writer's Checklist

- ☒ **Ideas and Content:** Are my ideas clear?
-  ☐ **Organization:** Did I use a topic sentence to create a strong beginning for my **paragraph**?
- ☒ **Voice:** Do the details tell how I feel? Do they make my writing sound like something I would have written?
- ☒ **Word Choice:** Did I choose strong words to tell what is happening?
- ☒ **Sentence Fluency:** Did I join related sentences to make compound sentences?
- ☒ **Conventions:** Did I capitalize proper nouns?
Did I check my spelling?





Talk About It

Who are some of the legendary figures of American history? What qualities must a person have to become a legend?



Find out more about American legends at www.macmillanmh.com

American Legends

Vocabulary

original	fireball
wring	impress
advertisement	elected
commenced	sauntered



Word Parts

Compound Words are words made by combining two smaller words. Sometimes you can figure out the meaning of a compound word by breaking it down into its word parts. For example, *fireball* is made up of *fire* and *ball* and means “a ball of fire.”



Grandma's Tales

by Daniel Fritz

My grandma lives in a town in Tennessee near the place Davy Crockett was born. She is a distant relative of his and thinks people should get all the **original** facts about this American legend straight. She is determined to **wring** the truth from all those wild stories about him. She feels those stories are like the words in an **advertisement**: they exaggerate and try to convince readers that Davy Crockett could accomplish impossible feats! My grandma agrees he was a man full of

energy and enthusiasm. But she wants people to remember he was a talented human being—not a superhero.

It was a cold, snowy night the last time Grandma told me Davy Crockett's life story. We were sitting on the couch, sipping hot chocolate when she **commenced** telling me facts about Davy's early life. “Davy Crockett was born in 1786,” she began. “The woods around here were beautiful then, but life wasn't easy. His family moved around a lot.”



“Was Davy a boy when he caught a flaming **fireball** with his bare hands?” I asked. “Is that when he picked up a rattlesnake and used it for a lasso?” I continued, trying to **impress** Grandma with my knowledge. She didn’t smile or laugh.

“Davy got married and had children. He farmed, hunted, and joined the army. He got interested in politics and was **elected** to Congress. He lived by the rule: ‘Be sure you are right. Then go ahead,’” Grandma said.

“When he left politics, Davy decided to explore Texas,” she continued. “That was where he had his last great adventure.”

“Yes!” I said. “That’s where he died a hero in the famous battle at the Alamo.”

That statement of fact brought a huge smile to Grandma’s face. “You got **THAT** right,” she said, happily. Then she **sauntered** slowly over to the coonskin cap sitting on her mantel and plopped it on my head.

Reread for Comprehension



Story Structure Plot and Setting

A Plot and Setting Chart helps you identify why the setting is important to the plot of the story. Use your Plot and Setting Chart as you reread “Grandma’s Tales” to find out how the setting is an important part of the story’s structure.

Plot	Setting

Comprehension

Genre

A **Tall Tale** is a story about a larger-than-life character that is so exaggerated you know it is not believable.



Story Structure

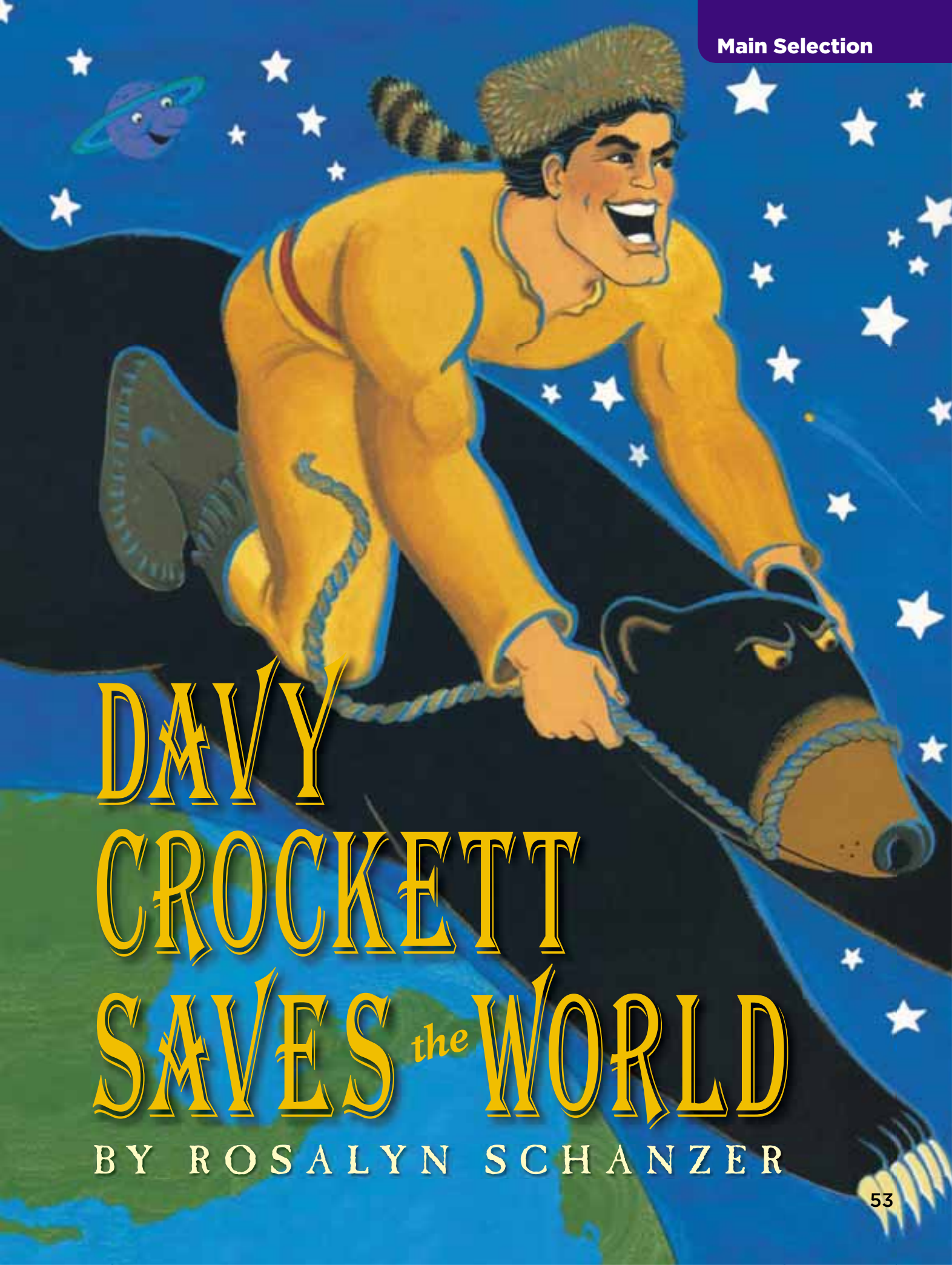
Plot and Setting

As you read, use your Plot and Setting Chart.

Plot	Setting

Read to Find Out

What problem does Davy Crockett try to solve?



DAVY CROCKETT SAVES *the* WORLD

BY ROSALYN SCHANZER



I reckon by now you've heard of Davy Crockett, the greatest woodsman who ever lived. Why, Davy could whip ten times his weight in wildcats and drink the Mississippi River dry. He combed his hair with a rake, shaved his beard with an ax, and could run so fast that, whenever he went out, the trees had to step aside to keep from getting knocked down.



Folks always crow about the deeds of Davy Crockett, but the biggest thing he ever did was to save the world. This here story tells exactly how he did it, and every single word is true, unless it is false.



Setting

Where and when does the story take place? What clues help you to identify the setting?



About the time our tale begins, the world was in a heap of trouble. A way past the clouds and far beyond all the stars and planets in outer space, scientists with telescopes had discovered the biggest, baddest ball of fire and ice and brimstone ever to light up the heavens.



Its name was Halley's Comet, and it was hurling itself lickety-split straight toward America. Why, its tail alone was two million miles long. If it were to hit the earth, everyone would be blown to smithereens!



The President of the United States started getting big piles of letters telling him to stop Halley's Comet before it was too late. He made a law telling the comet it couldn't crash into the earth, but the comet paid no attention. It just kept speeding toward America and growing bigger every day.

Finally the President had an idea. He had heard of a brave man named Davy Crockett, who lived somewhere in the mountains far away. He put an **advertisement** in all the newspapers in America that said:

WANTED
BY THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES
DAVY CROCKETT
TO PULL THE TAIL OFF OF
HALLEY'S COMET

Meanwhile, Davy Crockett didn't know a thing about any comet. He had no idea that the earth was even in danger. Davy was off in the forest with his pet bear, Death Hug. He was teaching himself to dance so that he could **impress** a real purty gal named Sally Sugartree, who could dance a hole through a double oak floor. He was not reading any newspapers.

It took two whole weeks, but once Davy had learned all the latest dances, he combed his hair nice and slow with his rake, shaved his face real careful-like with his ax, and **sauntered** off toward Sally Sugartree's cabin just as easy as you please.

All this time, of course, Halley's Comet was getting closer and closer to the earth and moving faster by the minute.





Now, Sally Sugartree was not just purty, but she was right smart too. Sally read the newspaper front to back every day, and she knew all about Halley's Comet. She had also seen the advertisement from the President.

Sally climbed up a fifty-foot hickory tree and commenced to look for Davy Crockett. Before long, she spotted him a way far off in the forest. Sally grabbed up her newspaper and waved it around just as hard as she could. When Davy saw her, he grinned and started to walk a mite faster.

As soon as Davy got close enough, Sally jumped right out of that tree. Davy caught her in his arms and gave her such a hug that her tongue stuck out half a foot and her eyes popped out like a lobster's. Then she showed Davy the want ad from the President.

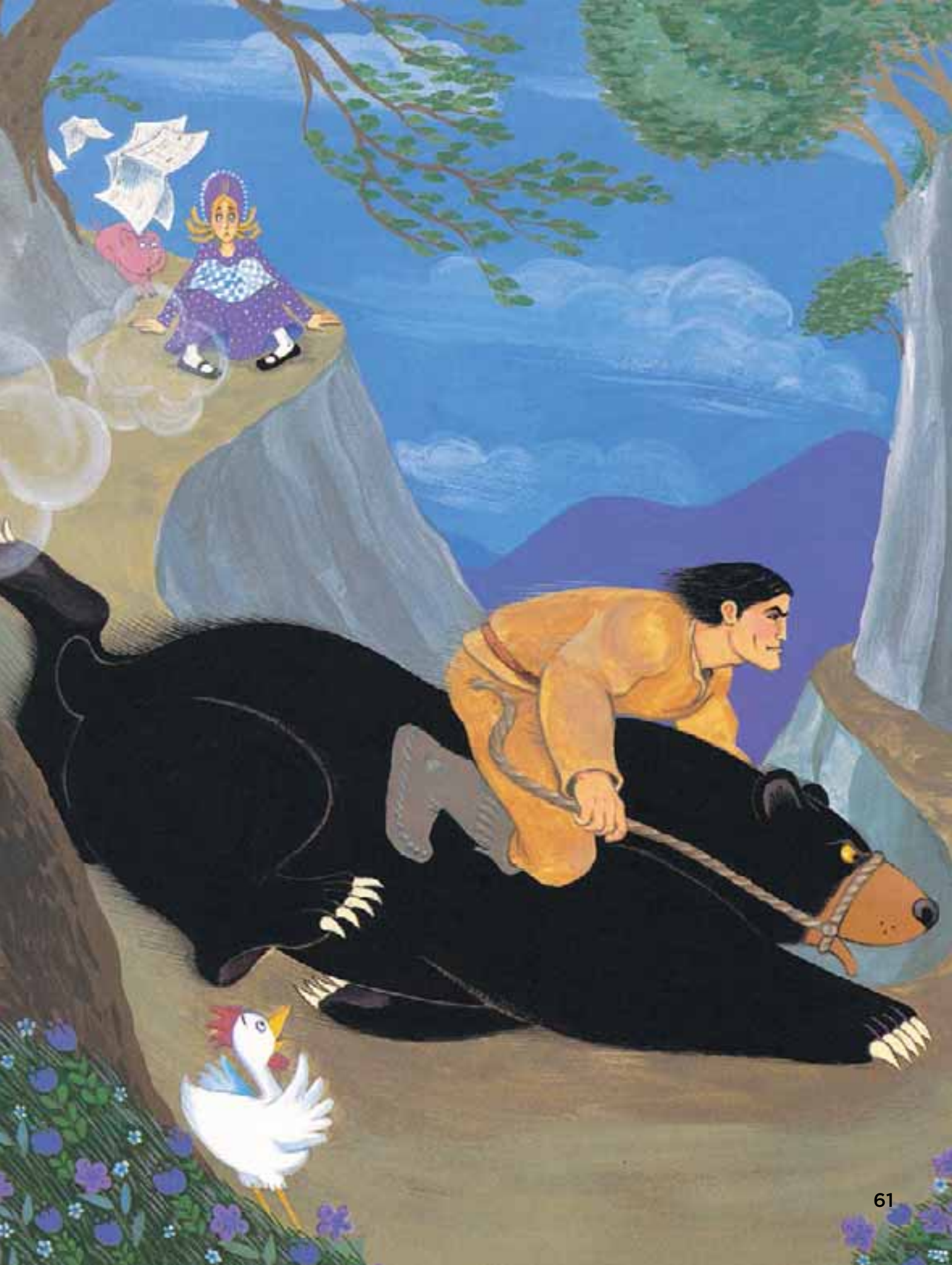
Davy still didn't know what Halley's Comet was, but if the President of the United States wanted to see him, he would waste no time getting to Washington. He bridled up Death Hug and set out like a high-powered hurricane. He could dance with Sally later.

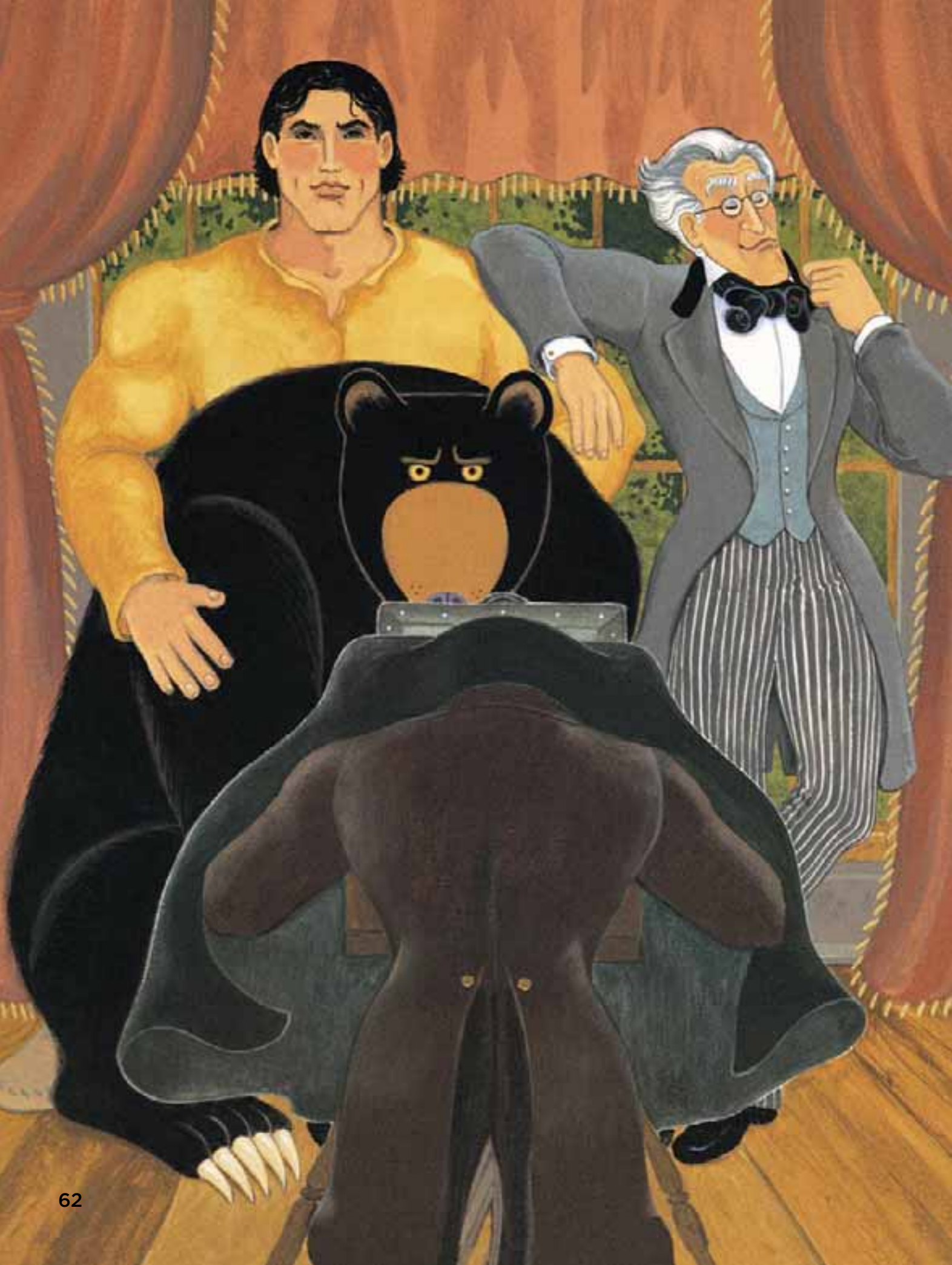
Death Hug was so fast that rocks and trees and cows and snakes and other varmints all flew out behind him.



Plot

Why is Davy's decision to go to Washington an important event in the plot?





By the time they reached the White House, Halley's Comet was getting so close that there wasn't a minute to lose.

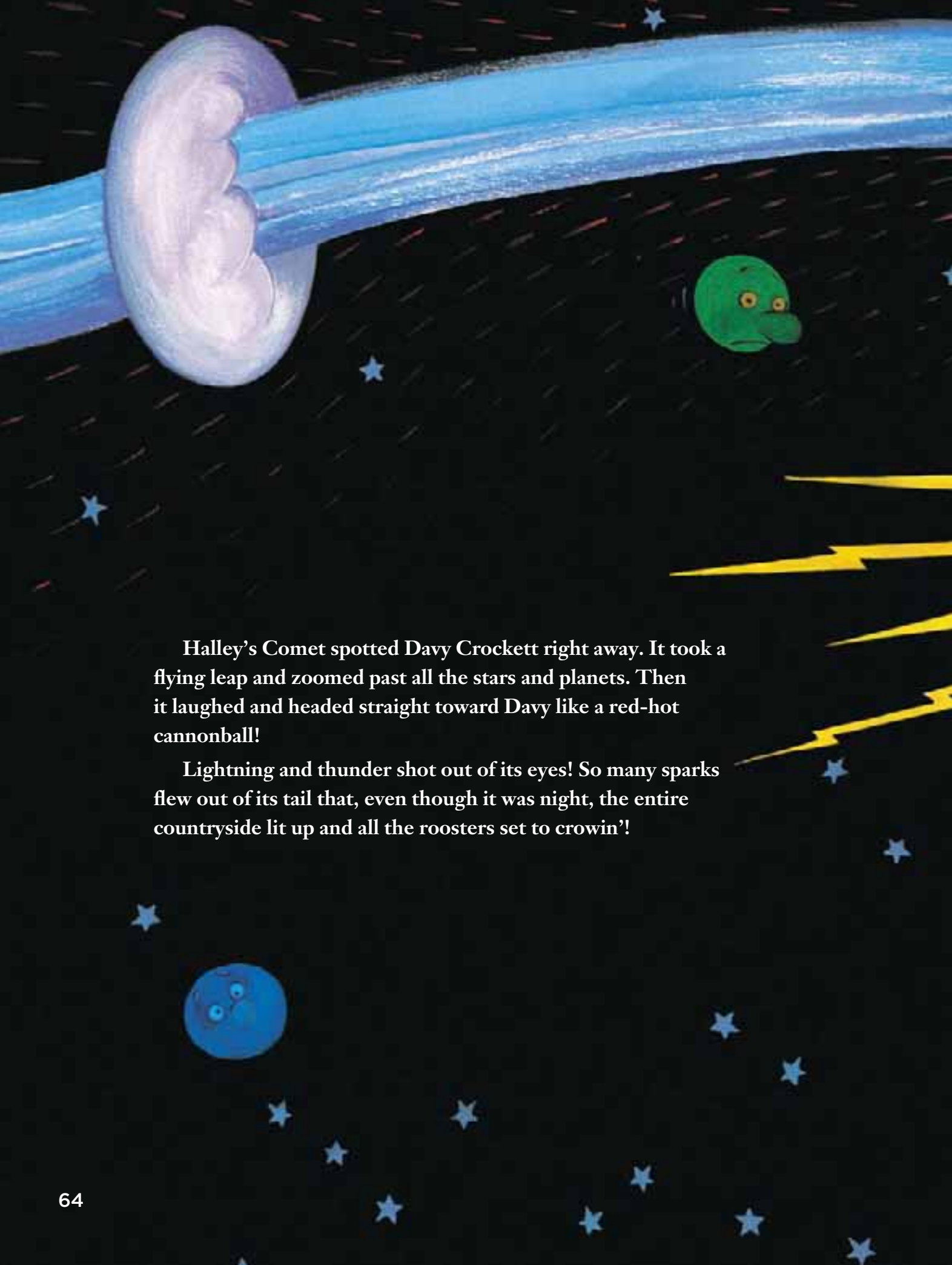
The President told Davy to climb the highest mountain he could find right away, and to **wring** that comet's tail off before it could destroy the earth. Then the President posed with Davy for pictures and pretended to look calm.

Davy combed his hair with his rake, rolled up his sleeves, and ate a big plateful of pickled rattlesnake brains fried by lightning to give him energy. Then he **commenced** to climb all the way to the top of Eagle Eye Peak in the Great Smoky Mountains.

Eagle Eye Peak was so high you could see every state and river and mountain in a whole geography book.

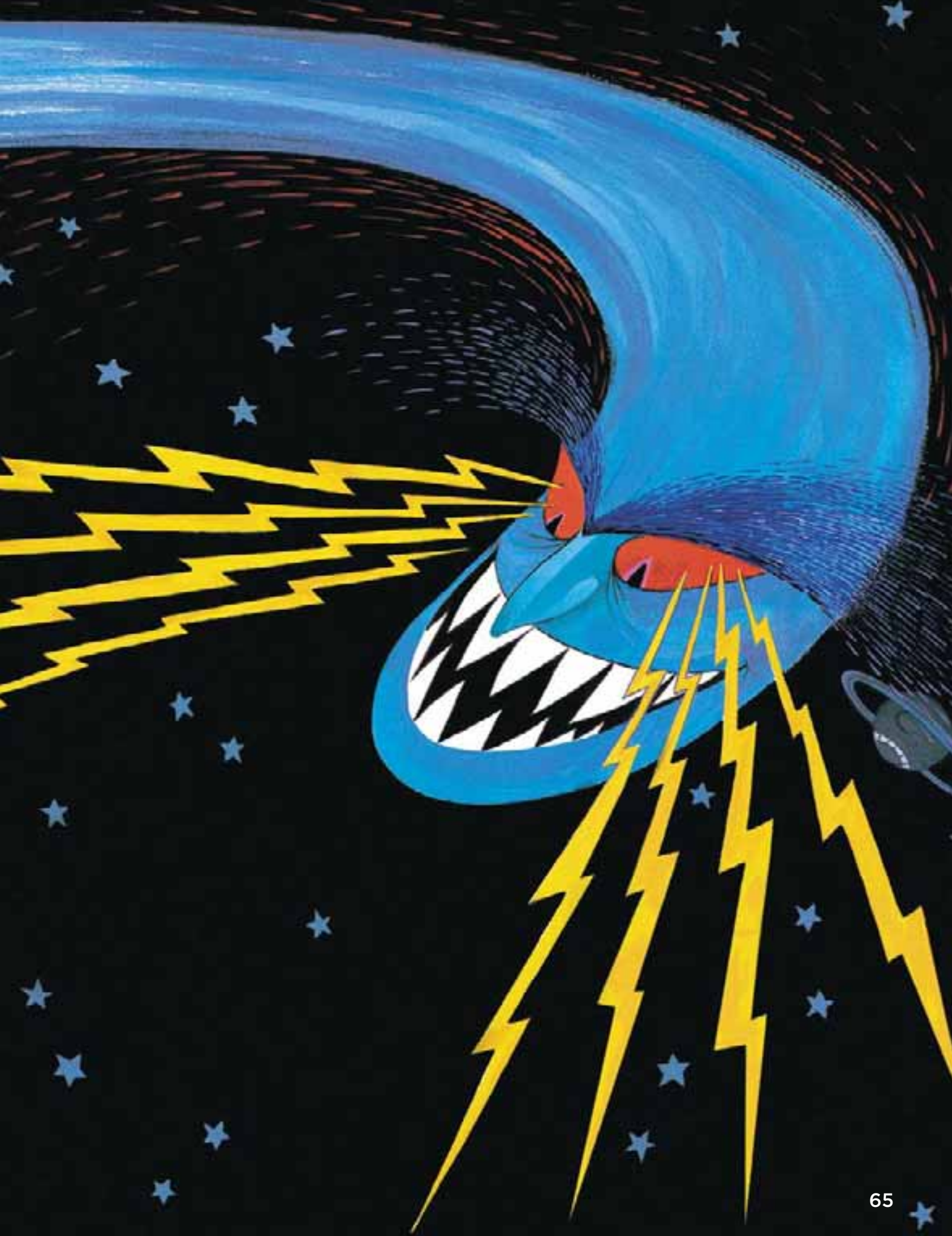
You could also look a way far off into outer space. By the time Davy reached the top, it was night.

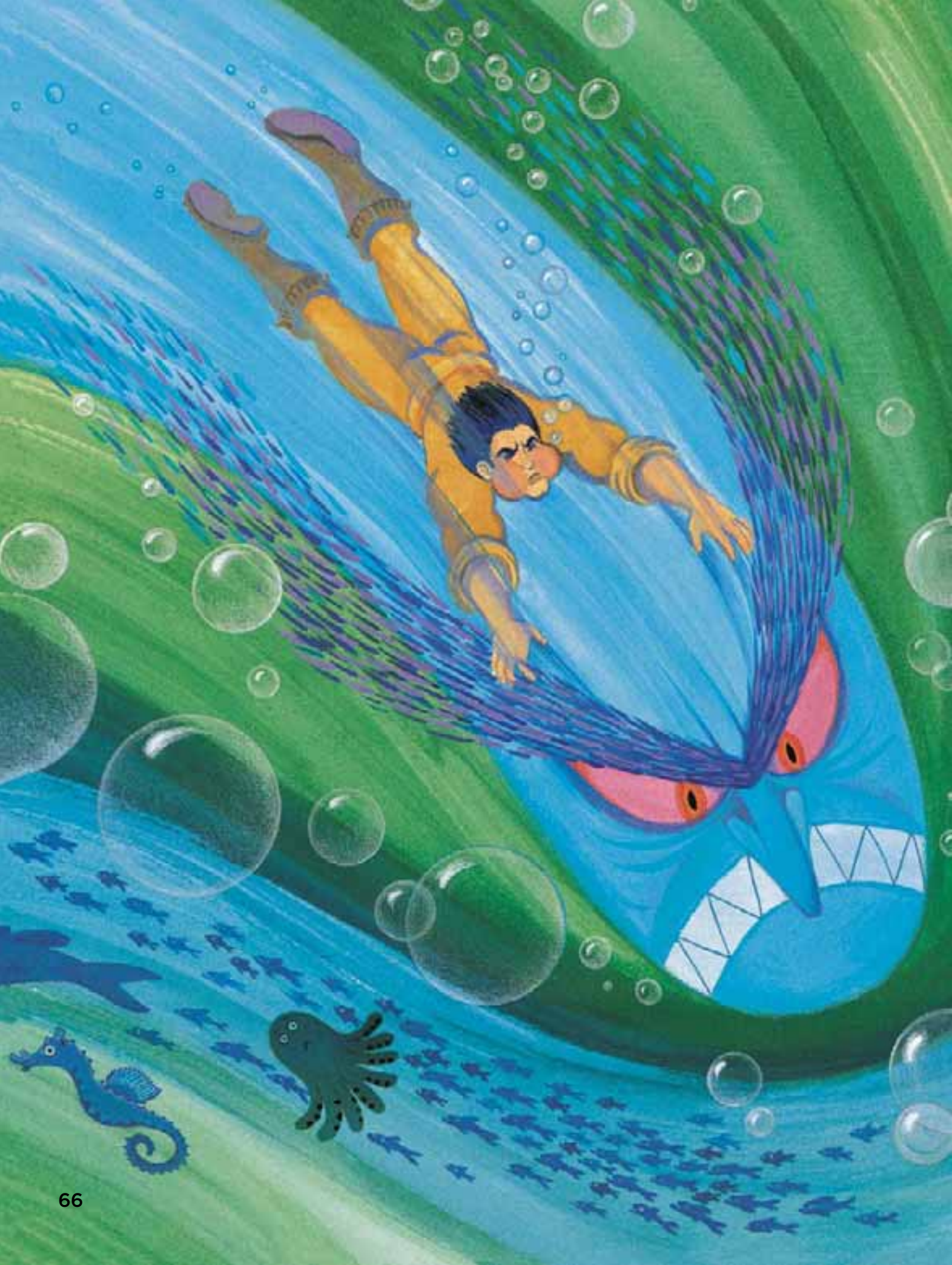




Halley's Comet spotted Davy Crockett right away. It took a flying leap and zoomed past all the stars and planets. Then it laughed and headed straight toward Davy like a red-hot cannonball!

Lightning and thunder shot out of its eyes! So many sparks flew out of its tail that, even though it was night, the entire countryside lit up and all the roosters set to crowin'!







That comet must have thought Davy looked mighty tender, for it licked its chops, howled louder than a hundred tornadoes, and roared toward him with its mouth wide open!

This made Davy so mad that he jumped right over its shoulders and onto its back. Then he planted his teeth around the comet's neck and hung on. Halley's Comet spun around and around like a whirlwind trying to throw Davy off, but it couldn't.

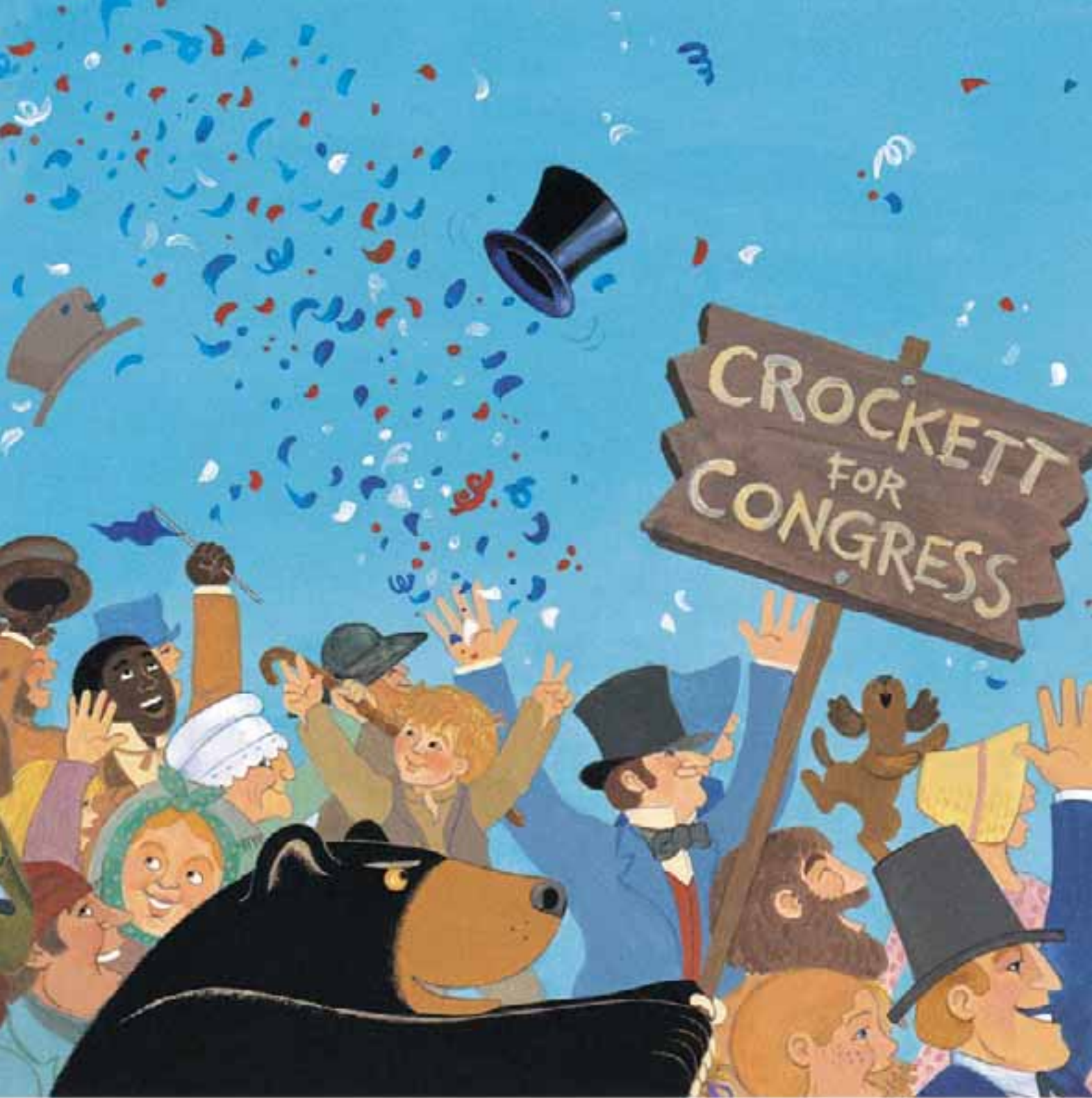
Next off, that comet tried to drown Davy by diving into the Atlantic Ocean. The water got so all-fired hot that it boiled! The whole world was covered with steam, and the sun didn't shine as bright as usual for a month.

Just in time, the ocean put out that comet's fire and melted all its ice. It washed up on an island, and before it could grow back to its **original** size, Davy grabbed what was left of Halley's tail, spun around seventeen times, and hurled the comet back into outer space. It was so discombobulated that the next time it ever came in this direction, it missed the earth by 39 million miles.





That's how Davy Crockett saved the world. In fact, he did such a good job that there was a huge parade in his honor, he got to marry Sally Sugartree, and he was even **elected** to Congress.



Of course, that infernal **fireball** singed the hair right off Davy's head. A whole new crop grew back in tufts like grass and kept in such a snarl that he couldn't even comb it without breaking his rake.

That's why these days Davy Crockett always wears a coonskin cap.

GO EXPLORING WITH ROSALYN SCHANZER



Rosalyn Schanzer loves adventure just as much as Davy Crockett. She swam with sharks in Belize; kayaked with whales in Alaska; fished for piranhas in South America; and even sailed a boat through the Bermuda Triangle. When Rosalyn wants to create a new story, she treks to a different part of the globe to seek an unusual adventure.

Before words ever hit the page, Rosalyn illustrates her books. While traveling she asks questions, snaps pictures, and researches facts that can be used for artistic inspiration.

After Rosalyn illustrates her new ideas and adventures, she brings the story to life with words. It seems only fitting that Rosalyn, who has gone on such unique adventures, takes such an unusual and adventurous approach to creating books.

Other books by Rosalyn Schanzer:

Gold Fever: Tales of the California

Gold Rush and How Ben Franklin

Stole the Lightning



Author's Purpose

Tall tale heroes and heroines do amazing things. Why might Rosalyn Schanzer have written this story besides wanting to explain Halley's Comet to readers?



Find out more about Rosalyn Schanzer at www.macmillanmh.com



Comprehension Check



Summarize

Use your Plot and Setting Chart to help you summarize *Davy Crockett Saves the World*. When preparing your summary, be sure to include only important events and characters.

Plot	Setting

Think and Compare



1. How does the setting of the Atlantic Ocean add to the excitement of the story? **Story Structure: Plot and Setting**
2. Reread page 54. Should you believe everything that is said about Davy Crockett? Why or why not? **Analyze**
3. If you were President, whom would you ask to save the world? Explain your answer. **Evaluate**
4. How would the President's **advertisement** to Davy Crockett be different if the story took place now? Explain. **Analyze**
5. Reread "Grandma's Tales" on pages 50–51. Describe how Grandma would react to *Davy Crockett Saves the World*. Use details from both stories to explain your answer. **Reading/Writing Across Texts**



Social Studies

Genre

Online Articles present facts about real people, living things, places, or events.

Text Features

A **Toolbar** is a strip of icons, or symbols, on a computer that allows you to visit different features on the Web page.

A **Link** is an electronic connection on a Web page that provides direct access to other documents or information.

Content Vocabulary

exaggerating **features**
superhuman

THE TALES ARE GETTING TALLER

by Kyle Seulen

Links related to this topic

Related Articles

- ▶ [Paul Bunyan](#)
- ▶ [John Henry](#)
- ▶ [Davy Crockett](#)
- ▶ [Pecos Bill](#)

Have you ever visited or seen pictures of Puget Sound in Washington State or the Black Hills of South Dakota? If so, you have seen some of Paul Bunyan's greatest work. One time, when Paul was headed out West, he dragged his giant pickax behind him, and the ditch he made with it was the Grand Canyon. This statement may be **exaggerating** the facts just a little. Paul Bunyan really did not make these beautiful places, but the stories we like to tell about him make him one of the heroes of American tall tales. What is a tall tale? Four **features** make a story a tall

This is a link to more
information about Pecos Bill.

Home

Browse

Search

T a l l T a l e s



This strip of icons is called a toolbar.



Tall tale heroes and the regions where they were born

tale. First, the hero must seem larger than life and have **superhuman** skills. Second, the hero usually has a certain job that he does better than anyone else. The hero might be a lumberjack or a cowhand, for example. Third, the hero must solve a problem in a way that surprises the reader or makes the audience laugh. Fourth, the details of the tale are exaggerated to be made greater than they really are. Often, the hero is bursting with courage

and ready to conquer any difficulty. As a rule, the heroes would be a little rough on the outside. Still, they had tender hearts and souls and possessed the most admirable qualities. They were helpful, always available to solve problems and determined to create a better world for their neighbors and friends.

How did the tradition of inventing tales starring characters that were larger-than-life begin? Tall tales probably started as settlers moved into America's wilderness areas. Life on the American frontier was difficult, exhausting, dangerous and uncertain. For the most part, the future was unknown and scary. When the day was done, pioneers gathered around the fire in search of relaxation and entertainment. Telling stories became a favorite pastime. It was a handy art form that could not only entertain but inspire as well. The tales that were told helped the people feel they could overcome danger, just as their favorite heroes had.

As the tales were repeated, they somehow took on a life of their own and grew bigger and better. For example, if someone roped a fierce bear and swung it across town, then in the retelling he roped the same bear and swung it across country. In the

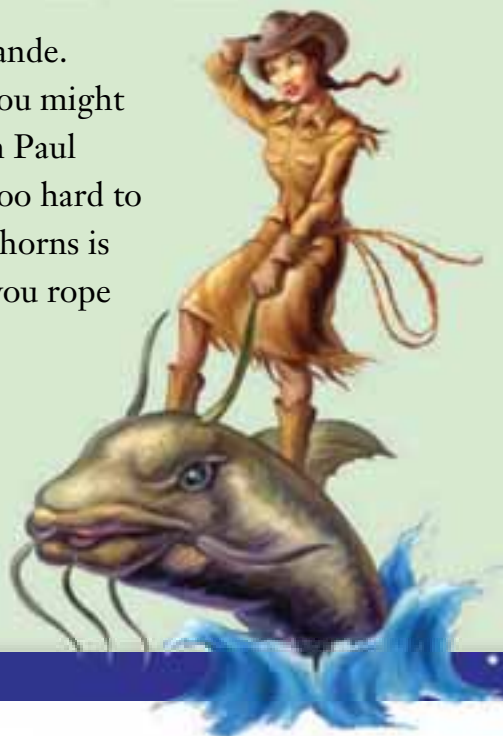
next telling of the story the hero would have swung the bear so far it landed on the moon. Even though no one believed a bear landed on the moon, people certainly enjoyed listening to the story as much as the storyteller enjoyed telling it.

A brand-new tall tale often had the fellow who told it or somebody from the "neighborhood" as its hero. But as the tale became more famous, people began to feel it wasn't "right" that such a wonderful story be told about an ordinary man. The pioneers decided that larger-than-life stories needed to feature larger-than-life heroes. So, they began putting famous characters in the leading roles of the stories they would tell. Some were real heroes of the day such as Davy Crockett or Jim Bridger. Others, like Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill, were products of the imaginations of good storytellers.

A particular tall tale might also be influenced by events in the region where it was born. People who made their living from the sea liked to hear stories about the adventures of Old Stormalong and his ship. Railroad workers liked to hear stories about John Henry, who could hammer railroad spikes faster than anyone else. Ranchers and cowboys enjoyed hearing about Pecos Bill who roped a mountain lion and rode it a hundred feet at a step. They also enjoyed hearing about Slue-foot



Sue who rode a catfish down the Rio Grande. Speaking of roping, if you feel up to it, you might try to catch a ride to the lumber camp on Paul Bunyan's blue ox, Babe. It shouldn't be too hard to catch him. The distance between Babe's horns is just a little over seven ax handles. Once you rope him and he takes you to the camp, relax by the campfire. The lumberjacks there will probably have another tale or two to share with you!



Connect and Compare



1. If you were on this Web page what feature would you select to help you find out more information about Babe, Paul Bunyan's ox? **Using Toolbars and Links**
2. If you were to write a tall tale, who would be the hero? Explain your answer. **Synthesize**
3. Think about "The Tales Are Getting Taller" and *Davy Crockett Saves the World*. How do you know that *Davy Crockett Saves the World* is a tall tale? **Reading/Writing Across Texts**

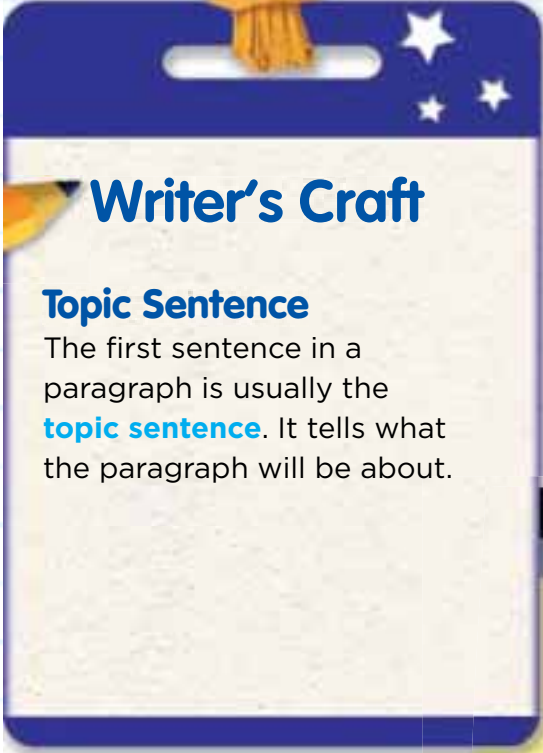


Social Studies Activity

Use an online encyclopedia to learn more about one hero on the map on page 73. Write a tall tale about the person you choose. Remember to exaggerate the tale.



Find out more about tall tales at www.macmillanmh.com



Writer's Craft

Topic Sentence

The first sentence in a paragraph is usually the **topic sentence**. It tells what the paragraph will be about.

Write About a Hero

Aliyah, My Hero

by Carla M.

My topic sentence tells about my own hero.



I wasn't afraid to tell how I really feel about Aliyah.



My hero, my neighbor Aliyah, is only seven years old, but she is the bravest person I know. Aliyah has cerebral palsy. Her muscles don't work properly, so she uses a wheelchair. I'd probably be mad at the world if I were Aliyah, but you never even know when Aliyah is having a tough day. She is always smiling.

Doing many everyday tasks is a challenge for Aliyah. Picking up a dropped pencil or getting into a car are complicated tasks. Aliyah gets everything done, but she needs to move slowly and carefully. It's amazing how much patience she has. She almost never gets frustrated.

Aliyah loves jokes, riddles, and games like "Twenty Questions" and "I Spy." Aliyah is so smart that she usually wins.

I know I am lucky to be friends with Aliyah. She has taught me what it really means to be special.

Your Turn

Write a few paragraphs about your own personal hero. Why is he or she your hero? Tell how you feel about this person. Use the writer's checklist to check your writing.



Writer's Checklist

- ☒ **Ideas and Content:** Does my writing say what I mean?
- ☒ **Organization:** Does my **topic sentence** let the reader know what I am writing about?
- ☒ **Voice:** Did I express my feelings about my hero?
- ☒ **Word Choice:** Did I use words that are fresh and new?
- ☒ **Sentence Fluency:** Did I use different sentence types?
- ☒ **Conventions:** Did I use commas in a series correctly? Did I check my spelling?